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ABSTRACT

Surveys conducted over three consecutive years sought to determine if beginning teachers graduating at the same time but with varying amounts of subsequent teaching experience perceived the quality of their training program differently. Questionnaires elicited 954 responses. Questions focused on five skill categories: planning, instructing, classroom management, evaluating, and diagnosing. Findings indicated: (1) graduates without teaching experience viewed their preparation more positively than their teacher counterparts; (2) nonteachers believed they were better prepared in all five skill categories than did teachers; (3) teachers saw themselves as less well-prepared to deal with handicapping conditions than those without teaching experience; (4) graduates without teaching experience felt less positive about how their preparation contributed to a positive attitude toward teaching; (5) the second year group was less positive about their preparation than those who taught only during the first year; and (6) there was an upswing and stabilization in teacher attitude following a sharp downward swing in the early months of teaching. The survey instrument is appended. (JD)

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The Relationship Between Teaching Experience and Satisfaction with Teacher Preparation: A Summary of Three Surveys

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Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, April, 1985.

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INTRODUCTION

Data suggest that attitudes toward the teaching profession are altered during the early months and years of teaching. These attitude changes have been so common that as a result of several studies employing the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory (MTAI), the beginning teacher profile has been labeled the "Curve of Disenchantment" (Ligana, 1970). This pattern of attitude change demonstrated a sharp negative drop about halfway through the first year of teaching, followed by an upswing and stabilization pattern later in the year, although the general attitude was still less positive than that exhibited during training.

Given the difficulty of this critical transition period, one which is usually accompanied by minimal support (Lortie, 1975; Johnston & Ryan, 1983), it is quite conceivable that graduates' perceptions of their preparation are likewise mediated by the extent and type of teaching experience. If teaching experience does affect ratings of teacher preparation, this may in turn affect analysis and interpretation of follow-up studies (now mandated by national accreditation standards). Further consideration of this impact is needed to determine <u>when</u> to collect and <u>how</u> to analyze data associated with follow-ups.

In response to concern about the possible effects of early teaching experiences on satisfaction with teacher preparation, three surveys were carried out to determine if beginning teachers graduating at the same time but with varying amounts of subsequent teaching experience perceived the quality of their training program differently.

METHOD

Participants

Each survey was carried out in the fall of the year, once each in 1981, 1982, 1983. The same questionnnaire was used each year and in all, it was sent to 1277 former students. These participants graduated with a bachelor of science degree from teaching licensure programs at the University of Minnesota 16 to 24 months prior to being surveyed. This group was comprised predominately of young adult, middle class Caucasions. No sampling techniques were used as an attempt was made to acquire responses from all members of the class.

Instrument

The survey instrument was an objectively scored paper and pencil questionnaire[1] with 68 items. Fifty of the items dealt with five skills categories common to virtually all areas of teaching. Most of the specific skills fall into a category Smith (1962) has labeled "clinical pedagogical knowledge." The items were distributed across skills in the following manner: planning--17 items; instructing--10 items; managing the classroom--7 items; evaluating--10 items; and diagnosing--6 items. An additional 8 items were concerned with "general outcomes", such as "mastering the subject matter of my teaching speciality", and 10 more examined various "student services". A cover sheet on the questionnaire was used to collect information about current employment and school context factors.

Four major steps were employed in developing the questionnaire. First, selected studies on teaching and reviews of literature on teaching

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[1] See Appendix A.

effectiveness were consulted to identify appropriate items (Good, 1981; Medley, 1979; Peterson & Walberg, 1979; Rosenshine, 1979; Soar, 1980). The literature review was further buttressed by an examination of descriptions of some 26 teacher education programs and the commonly desired outcomes for students described therein. The information from these sources provided the basis for an item pool. Second, items were developed and reviewed by a three person research team. Third, a draft of questionnaire items was reviewed by a faculty advisory group and administrators. Finally, the questionnaire was pre-tested using current students in two undergraduate methods courses. Based on the feedback obtained from these trials, a final revision was made.

Procedures

Each of the three years the survey was carried out a series of steps was followed in order to obtain an adequate response rate and comparability of results. First, a pre-survey introductory letter was sent to explain the survey's purpose and to encourage participation. Second, a questionnaire and cover letter explaining the voluntary and confidential nature of the study were sent along with a stamped return envelope. Third, non-respondents were mailed a postcard reminder. Fourth, a duplicate questionnaire was sent to non-respondents. Finally, the remaining non-respondents were telephoned and asked to participate, and an additional questionnaire was sent, if necessary. Using the preceding steps, response rates of 80%, 72%, and 72% were obtained in 1981, 1982, and 1983 respectively. Altogether across the three years, of the 1277 sent, 954 returned useable questionnaires.

Data Analysis

For each year (1981, 1982, 1983) respondents were placed into one of four groups: 1) those who taught only during the first academic year following graduation; 2) those who taught only during the second; 3) those who taught both years; and 4) those who taught neither year.

This crossing of year with teaching experience resulted in a four by three design. Using 58 questionnaire items as dependent variables (those dealing with student services were eliminated), multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to analyze the data. F-approximations of Wilks' Lambda statistic were used to judge the significance of multivariate effects.

Due to the conceptual independence of the various sections of the questionnaire (i.e., "general outcomes," "planning," "instructing," "managing the classroom," "evaluating," and "diagnosing"), a separate multivariate significance test was carried out for each of the six sections analyzed.

Results

Significant[2] multivariate teaching experience effects were obtained for planning, instructing, managing the classroom, evaluating, diagnosing, and general outcomes. Significant ANOVAs were distributed as follows: planning--8, instructing--2, managing the classroom--6, evaluating--5, diagnosing--3, and general outcomes--5. Difference, or reverse Helmert contrasts,[3] were used to compare the levels of teaching experience on each

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[2]All significance tests were carried out with alpha set at .05.

[3]First contrast (1)=no teaching experience vs. teaching experience (-1/3, -1/3, -1/3, 1); Second contrast (2)=two years teaching experience vs. one year teaching experience (-1/2, -1/2, 1, 0); Third contrast (3)= second year teaching only vs. first year teaching only (-1, 1, 0, 0). Significant contrasts are identified by number in the tables, i.e., 1, 2, and 3. Numbers prefixed with a minus sign (-) indicate that the value of the contrast is negative.

significant variable. Significant contrasts were distributed as follows: planning--17, instructing--4, managing the classroom--10, evaluating--7, diagnosing--4, and general outcomes--4. No multivariate effects were significant for year of survey or for the interaction of year with teaching experience. It was therefore appropriate to interpret teaching experience effects without reference to survey year. Results of significant multivariate and univariate analyses of variance and significant contrasts are reported in Tables 1 to 6.[4]

DISCUSSION

Unlike Ryan (1979) who found little consistency in teacher judgments about the adequacy of their preparation, there are uniformities in these results. Results appear to both confirm and disconfirm expectations that graduates' perceptions of the quality of their preparation would fit the beginning teacher profile described by Liganna (1970) as the "Curve of Disenchantment."

First, data support expectations that graduates without teaching experience would view their preparation more positively than their teacher counterparts. A pattern exists for the difference between the teaching and nonteaching groups supported by significant contrasts on 86% of the items with significant ANOVAs following a significant MANOVA. In contrast to teachers nonteachers believed that they were better prepared in all five teaching skills categories, and rated their preparation to accomplish two general outcomes more positively. A theme pervading these items developed in the area of students' special needs. The teachers saw themselves as less well-prepared to deal with developmental differences and handicapping conditions than those without teaching experience. On the other hand, graduates without teaching experience felt

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[4]See Appendix B.

significantly less positive about how their preparation contributed to a positive attitude toward teaching.

Second, there was a negative second year effect supported by significant contrasts on 58% of the items with significant ANOVAs following a significant MANOVA. In all five categories showing significant contrasts (diagnosing was the exception), the second year group was significantly less positive about their preparation than those who taught only during the first year. Since the survey was conducted during the early months of the school year, this pattern probably reflects the "Curve of Disenchantment". The critical transition period common to beginning teachers may be especially difficult for those entering the field one year after graduation. The insecurity involved may affect views of the quality of their preparation.

Finally, according to the model, with experience and increased confidence there is an upswing and stabilization in teacher attitude following the sharp downward swing in the early months of teaching. Based on this pattern one might expect that those who taught both years would be more favorably disposed toward their preparation than graduates with one year of teaching experience. With the exception of one planning variable, they were not. It may be that since the questionnaire was administered during the early months of the second school year, the amount of teaching experience was not sufficiently different in the two groups to provide an adequate test. Further analyses are planned with third year teachers to investigate possible differences.

Significant negative values were obtained for this same group on one planning and two diagnosing variables. On these items those who taught both years following graduation viewed their preparation less positively than those with only one year of experience. While those who

taught both years felt well-prepared to plan units of study, it may be that feelings of inadequacy return in the second year of teaching for certain complex teaching skills (e.g., those dealing with determining and planning for individual differences and participating in case conferences with staff). This result may reflect the same theme which emerged in Ryan's study (1979), namely, the beginner's realization of the limits of teacher preparation programs for teaching skills such as these.

Since it appears that the differential effects of length of teaching experience mediate graduate assessment of teacher preparation, consideration needs to be given to the design, analysis, and interpretation of follow-up studies. Additionally, these data provide insights about specific concepts and skills commonly addressed in preservice programs which apparently assume more complexity and multi-dimensionality for teachers as they acquire classroom experience.

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Appendix A

SURVEY OF GRADUATES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: Please complete ALL sections in the questionnaire. When you have completed the form, return it in the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelope. Your frank reactions are very important in helping us to 1) identify program strengths and areas which need improvement, 2) modify the program to meet student needs, and 3) make long-range plans. All your reactions will be kept confidential. The first identifying page will be detached from the questionnaire after you have returned it.

PART I - GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Name _____
Last First Initial (Maiden)

B. Present Address _____
Street

_____
City State Zipcode

If you are currently employed, please complete the following:

C. Employer _____

D. Job Title _____

_____ Full-Time Position _____ Part-Time Position

E. Place of Work (e.g., company or school building address)

_____
Name Street

_____
City State Zipcode

Only those who are currently teaching should complete the next three items. For items G and H, check (X) the characteristic which best describes your school.

F. School District Number _____

G. Predominant Socio-Economic Status
_____ Low
_____ Lower middle
_____ Middle
_____ Upper middle
_____ High

H. Percentage of Minorities
_____ Under 10%
_____ 11 - 30%
_____ 31 - 50%
_____ 51 - 70%
_____ Over 70%

PART II

Instructions: This part of the questionnaire consists of several statements about general outcomes of instruction and student services in the College of Education. You are asked to circle the number that best reflects your opinion about each item, using the key at the top of each column.

GENERAL OUTCOMES: How would you rate the instruction you received in the College of Education in terms of accomplishing the following general outcomes of your educational program?

1. No Instruction
2. Poor Instruction
3. Fair Instruction
4. Good Instruction
5. Very Good Instruction

1.	Master the subject matter of my teaching specialty.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Learn a variety of methods for teaching my subject(s).	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Learn how social/psychological theories could be applied in professional practice.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Develop competence in teaching as a result of student teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Develop an understanding of the social contribution teachers can make.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Learn how the role of the teacher has changed over time.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Develop a positive attitude toward teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Develop a sense of professional responsibility.	1	2	3	4	5

STUDENT SERVICES: How would you rate the quality of the following student services which you used? Circle NA to indicate the services you have not used.

1. Very Poor Quality
2. Poor Quality
3. Fair Quality
4. Good Quality
5. Very Good Quality

1.	Academic advising.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
2.	Orientation program for the College of Education.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
3.	Information about educational planning.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
4.	Information about career planning.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
5.	Procedures for admissions to the College of Education.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
6.	Class registration procedures.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
7.	Registration procedures for student teaching.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
8.	Counseling services at the Education Career Development Office.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
9.	Individualized interpretation of College requirements by the Student Progress Committee.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
10.	Placement services.	1	2	3	4	5	NA

(SEE OTHER SIDE)

PART III

Instructions: Here is a list of general teaching skills. Circle the number that tells how well you were prepared to do these things, using the key at the top of the column.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR PREPARATION TO DO THESE THINGS?

1. No Preparation
2. Poor Preparation
3. Fair Preparation
4. Good Preparation
5. Very Good Preparation

PLANNING

1.	Constructing lesson plans.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Planning units of study.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Justifying instructional plans.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Stating explicit goals and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Selecting a model of teaching to fit an instructional goal (e.g., inquiry model).	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Selecting specific teaching procedures to help students attain objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Finding instructional materials needed to implement plans.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Selecting instructional materials according to specified criteria (e.g., reading level).	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Selecting instructional methods that match student developmental needs.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Designing learning experiences to help all students make the most of their abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Taking account of special needs (e.g., handicapped).	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Sequencing learning experiences to accomplish objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Designing the classroom environment to promote learning.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Building motivators into instructional plans (e.g., variety).	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Evaluating an instructional plan according to explicit standards.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Predicting possible effects of instructional plans on students.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Preparing outlines for effective oral presentations.	1	2	3	4	5

HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR PREPARATION TO DO THESE THINGS?

1. No Preparation
2. Poor Preparation
3. Fair Preparation
4. Good Preparation
5. Very Good Preparation

INSTRUCTING

1.	Using computers in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Using audiovisual equipment in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Using an effective presentation style.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Asking different kinds of questions to stimulate different kinds of student learning.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Giving on-going feedback to guide student performance.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Modifying plans to deal with unexpected events or student responses (e.g., an interest in pursuing a particular topic).	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Demonstrating principles or procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Explaining how or why something happened.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Defining concepts.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Improving students' questioning and discussion skills.	1	2	3	4	5

MANAGING THE CLASSROOM

1.	Providing rewards to motivate students.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Encouraging self-direction in students.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Dealing with behavior problems during class.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Clarifying expectations for student behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Holding students responsible for their actions.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Resolving interpersonal conflict.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Interacting with students who have special needs.	1	2	3	4	5

EVALUATING

1.	Establishing evaluation criteria.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Interpreting standardized achievement tests.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Constructing tests to measure student progress.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Using criterion-referenced tests.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Evaluating personal teaching effectiveness.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Critiquing student performance (e.g., strengths, areas which need improvement).	1	2	3	4	5

(SEE OTHER SIDE)

HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR PREPARATION TO DO THESE THINGS?

1. No Preparation
2. Poor Preparation
3. Fair Preparation
4. Good Preparation
5. Very Good Preparation

EVALUATING CONTINUED

7.	Using evaluation results to improve instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Reporting information about students to parents.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Assigning student grades.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Evaluating the ethical consequences of your own actions.	1	2	3	4	5

DIAGNOSING

1.	Keeping anecdotal records of atypical student behaviors.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Using a variety of methods to determine student status.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Integrating information from several sources to determine student needs.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Determining student developmental level.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Participating in case conferences with staff.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Identifying non-instructional factors which may be limiting student progress.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B

Table 1

Significant Univariate Effects for Planning Variables[a]

Variables (Questionnaire Item)	Group Means[b] 1 N=153	2 N=51	3 N=287	4 N=341	Pooled S	F (3,820 D.F.)	P-value	Significant Contrasts
2. Planning units of study.	3.94	3.43	3.90	3.94	.891	5.05	.002	1,2,-3
7. Finding instructional materials needed to implement plans.	3.50	3.10	3.49	3.58	.990	3.69	.013	1,-3
9. Selecting instructional methods that match student developmental needs.	3.31	3.08	3.19	3.42	.872	4.83	.002	1
10. Designing learning experiences to help all students make the most of their abilities.	3.54	3.18	3.18	3.58	.906	12.40	<.001	1,-2,-3
11. Taking account of special needs (e.g., handicapped).	3.07	3.51	2.82	3.19	1.054	10.41	<.001	1,-3
15. Evaluating an instructional plan according to explicit standards.	3.38	3.02	3.30	3.46	.932	4.14	.006	1,-3
16. Predicting possible effects of instructional plans on students.	3.18	2.78	3.15	3.19	.940	2.80	.039	1,-3
17. Preparing outlines for effective oral presentations.	3.24	2.63	3.05	3.30	1.108	7.13	<.001	1,-3

[a] Multivariate Test of Significance, Wilks' Lamda Statistic (F 2.535(51,2394.44), p=<.001)

[b] 1=first year only
2=second year only
3=taught both years
4=never taught

Table 2

Significant Univariate Effects for Instructing Variables[a]

Variables (Questionnaire Item)	Group Means[b] 1 N=154	2 N=51	3 N=301	4 N=345	Pooled S	F (3,839 D.F.)	P-value	Significant Contrasts
2. Using audiovisual equipment in the classroom.	2.84	2.08	2.56	2.73	1.232	5.96	.001	1,-3
7. Demonstrating principles or procedures.	3.67	3.29	3.59	3.79	.861	6.36	<.001	1,-3

[a]Multivariate Test of Significance, Wilks' Lamda Statistic (F 2.351(30,2436.89), p=<.001)

[b]1=first year only
2=second year only
3=taught both years
4=never taught

Table 3

Significant Univariate Effects for Managing the Classroom Variables[a]

Variables (Questionnaire Item)	Group Means[b] 1 N=158	2 N=53	3 N=304	4 N=356	Pooled S	F (3,859 D.F.)	P-value	Significant Contrasts
2. Encouraging self-direction in students.	3.37	3.00	3.22	3.43	.937	5.05	.002	1,-3
3. Dealing with behavior problems during class.	3.20	2.77	2.97	3.25	1.081	5.72	.001	1,-3
4. Clarifying expectations for student behavior.	3.49	3.19	3.23	3.51	.958	5.94	.001	1,-3
5. Holding students responsible for their actions.	3.41	3.08	3.16	3.42	1.045	4.84	.002	1
6. Resolving interpersonal conflict.	3.05	2.70	2.89	3.11	.989	4.45	.004	1,-3
7. Interacting with students who have special needs.	3.10	2.83	2.90	3.20	1.062	5.13	.002	1

[a]Multivariate Test of Significance, Wilks' Lamda Statistic (F 1.583(21,2449.91), p=.046)

[b]1=first year only
2=second year only
3=taught both years
4=never taught

Table 4

Significant Univariate Effects for Evaluating Variables[a]

Variables (Questionnaire Item)	Group Means[b] 1 N=153	2 N=52	3 N=302	4 N=351	Pooled S	F (3,846 D.F.)	P-value	Significant Contrasts
1. Establishing evaluation criteria.	3.59	3.21	3.34	3.54	.918	4.95	.002	1,-3
6. Critiquing student performance (e.g., strengths, areas which need improvement).	3.53	3.15	3.25	3.48	.954	5.62	.001	1,-3
7. Using evaluation results to improve instruction.	3.29	3.04	3.17	3.38	.948	3.83	.010	1
9. Assigning student grades.	3.03	2.69	2.80	3.09	1.078	5.10	.002	1,-3

[a]Multivariate Test of Significance, Wilks' Lamda Statistic (F 1.756(30,2457.44), p=.007)

[b]1=first year only
2=second year only
3=taught both years
4=never taught

Table 5

Significant Univariate Effects for Diagnosing Variables[a]

Variables (Questionnaire Item)	Group Means[b] 1 N=157	2 N=53	3 N=302	4 N=355	Pooled S	F (3,855 D.F.)	P-value	Significant Contrasts
3. Integrating information from several sources to determine student needs.	2.98	2.87	2.74	3.09	1.022	6.53	<.001	1,-2
4. Determing student developmental level.	2.95	2.83	2.75	3.08	.938	7.08	<.001	1
5. Participating in case conferences with staff.	2.50	2.40	2.27	2.50	1.648	2.72	.044	-2

[a]Multivariate Test of Significance, Wilks' Lamda Statistic (F 2.018(18,2404.65), p=.007)

[b]1=first year only
2=second year only
3=taught both years
4=never taught

Table 6

Significant Univariate Effects for General Outcome Variables[a]

Variables (Questionnaire Item)	Group Means[b] 1 N=155	2 N=52	3 N=298	4 N=349	Pooled S	F (3,842 D.F.)	P-value	Significant Contrasts
3. Learn how social/psychological theories could be applied in professional practice.	3.33	3.13	3.27	3.41	.832	2.69	.045	1
5. Develop an understanding of the social contribution teachers can make.	3.51	2.90	3.26	4.41	.975	6.38	.0003	1,-3
7. Develop a positive attitude toward teaching.	3.90	3.67	3.90	3.60	.955	6.75	.0002	-1

[a]Multivariate Test of Significance, Wilks' Lamda Statistic (F 3.361(24,2422.36), p=<.001)

[b]1=first year only
2=second year only
3=taught both years
4=never taught